

Seismic Safety Commission
Minutes of Teleconference Meeting
September 24, 2003
1755 Creekside Oaks Drive, Suite 100
Sacramento, California

Members Participating

Stan Y. Moy, Chairman
Lucy Jones, Vice Chair
Mark Church
Lawrence T. Klein
Don Manning
Linden Nishinaga
Celestine Palmer
Donald R. Parker
Daniel Shapiro

Members Absent

Andrew Adelman
Senator Richard Alarcon/Chris Modrzejewski
Jim Beall
Bruce R. Clark
Jimmie R. Yee

Staff Participating

Richard McCarthy
Abby Browning
Karen Cogan
Henry Sepulveda

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The meeting of the Seismic Safety Commission was called to order by Chairman Stan Moy at 9:02 a.m. Executive Assistant Karen Cogan called the roll and confirmed the quorum.

II. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Chairman Moy noted this teleconference meeting was called because a quorum was not present at the September 11 meeting in Vallejo. He urged commissioners to make a greater commitment to attend future meetings. Chairman Moy commented that the lack of a quorum was somewhat embarrassing because the mayor and city manager of Vallejo attended the meeting, as well as a number of key people who had worked on the Urban Search and Rescue Emergency Advisory Committee report.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT (Out of Order)

Budget Update & Review

Executive Director Richard McCarthy reported that the staff is preparing to respond to the Department of Finance's instructions to present proposals for a 20 percent budget cut this fiscal year. He noted there is still some confusion about the exact amount and whether the cuts apply to agencies not funded from the general fund, but the staff is working to obtain clarifications. He said the amount of budget reduction the Commission can expect is somewhere between \$58,000 and \$77,000.

Director of Legislation Henry Sepulveda noted the Department of Finance will be making a final decision on the exact amount of cuts for each agency soon. He added that Department of Finance representatives have discussed a \$61,000 ceiling for the Seismic Safety Commission, or a cut of about 8 percent. An executive order mandating the reduction is expected to come within the next couple months. Mr. McCarthy said the staff will have more detailed information after the October 7 recall election.

Workers' Compensation Claim

Ms. Cogan informed the Commission of a pending workers' compensation claim against six state agencies, including the Commission. She noted the claim was filed by the husband of a state employee who died in 2001. The employee, Deborah Hansen, worked for the Seismic Safety Commission for a 13-month period between October of 1981 to August of 1982, and the claim has to do with her exposure to asbestos. Ms. Cogan noted the Department of General Services tested the Commission's office building at 1900 K Street for asbestos and found no airborne asbestos contamination, so the Commission's exposure appears to be minimal.

Ms. Cogan stated that the case is currently in the discovery phase, and the widower's deposition has been scheduled for October 17. She noted the Commission was billed \$1,300 for a medical evaluation, and the deposition could cost up to \$1,000 more. She added she would keep the Commission informed as the case develops.

State Hazard Mitigation Plan

Mr. McCarthy said Mr. Fred Turner and Mr. Robert Anderson are working with the Office of Emergency Services (OES) to draft the seismic portion of the state's hazard mitigation plan. He noted the staff will send the draft section to all commissioners for their comments in mid-October. Once all sections of the entire document are completed, the hazard mitigation plan will be circulated for public comments.

ABAG Letter of Support

Mr. McCarthy reported that the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) requested that the Commission send a letter to FEMA supporting ABAG's request for funding to assist 120 local governments to develop mitigation plans. He recommended approval of the request.

ACTION: Commissioner Lawrence Klein made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mark Church, that:

The Commission authorize the staff to send a letter to FEMA in support of ABAG's funding request.

* Motion carried, 9 - 0.

III. APPROVAL OF AUGUST 13, 2003 TELECONFERENCE MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Minutes

Chairman Moy noted that changes to the August 13 minutes were discussed at the September 11 meeting. He recommended that the Commission approve the minutes as amended.

ACTION: Commissioner Dan Shapiro made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Linden Nishinaga, that:

The Commission approve the minutes of the August 13 meeting as amended.

* Motion carried, 9 - 0.

V. APPROVAL OF URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE EMERGENCY ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Don Parker noted commissioners had an opportunity to review the committee's report, which incorporates the input of many talented people. He said he was pleased to participate in the process and learned a great deal about urban search and rescue needs and resources. He commended and thanked Mr. Sepulveda for his work in preparing the report.

Commissioner Parker pointed out a minor typographical inconsistency; he noted the word "ageing" is spelled differently on Page 4 than in the rest of the report. He added that both "aging" and "ageing" are correct, but "aging" is the preferred spelling in the U.S. Mr. Sepulveda said the staff will conduct a global search and correct the spelling throughout.

Commissioner Parker noted AB 2002 (Alquist), the bill that established the committee, was signed on September 11, 2002, and the report was presented to the Commission exactly one year later. He said AB 2002 directed the committee to assess USAR needs in California and prepare a strategy for addressing those needs. Commissioner Parker observed that the report does a thorough job describing the status of USAR operations in the state and detailing specific equipment and training needs. He noted California currently has eight USAR teams, but their capabilities and resources vary considerably in different regions and local areas. The report discusses ways of expanding and increasing statewide resources to enhance the ability of local teams to respond effectively to emergencies arising from large earthquakes and other disasters. Commissioner Parker drew attention to the findings and recommendations on Page 4 of the report.

ACTION: Commissioner Parker made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Shapiro, that:

The Commission accept the report of the Urban Search and Rescue Emergency Advisory Committee.

Commissioner Parker recommended that the Commission take steps to follow up on the report recommendations.

Commissioner Shapiro suggested forwarding the report to members of the Legislature and the Governor's Office.

Mr. Sepulveda said AB 2002 directed the committee to prepare the report and submit it to the Commission chair by September 1, and that deadline was met. Although the statute does not mandate any future steps, the Commission recommended at the September 11 meeting that the committee be retained to help prioritize the recommendations. Mr. Sepulveda added that he followed up by contacting committee members and alerting them to the possibility of continued service. He suggested notifying legislators that the report was completed and is available upon request.

Commissioner Shapiro proposed that the Commission take a more active role in disseminating the report. Chairman Moy noted other commissioners shared that sentiment.

Commissioner Parker recommended distributing the report to elected officials so they are aware of the issues and needs and have avenues for addressing the problems. He noted the report can be a valuable tool and helps demonstrate the value of the Seismic Safety Commission. He suggested hand-delivering the report to key legislators.

Commissioner Shapiro supported Commissioner Parker's suggestions. He noted the report provides an opportunity for commissioners and staff to visit legislators in person.

Commissioner Shapiro commented that the report is a good first step in upgrading the state's USAR capabilities. He emphasized the importance of revisiting the issue after each seismic event to make sure lessons learned are applied and remembered. He suggested reconvening the committee periodically for that purpose.

Ms. Cogan suggested announcing the report in a press release. There was general consensus supporting the idea of a press release as a way of publicizing the report.

Mr. Sepulveda noted the Legislature is in recess until January. He suggested either scheduling meetings with legislators in their district offices in the interim, or waiting until January to visit key people in Sacramento. Commissioner Manning expressed his opinion that it would be better to wait until January. Mr. Sepulveda offered the assistance of the staff in helping to schedule meetings.

Chairman Moy recommended letting former Assemblywoman Alquist know that the report had been completed. Mr. Sepulveda noted Assemblywoman Alquist was termed out of office last November, but the staff will communicate with her as well. Chairman Moy suggested asking Ms. Alquist to make recommendations for follow-up actions.

Commissioner Celestine Palmer proposed distributing the report to the eight existing USAR teams in California. Mr. Sepulveda said representatives from several of the teams participated on the committee, but all teams may not be aware of the report and its findings. Commissioner Parker commented that he thought it was an excellent idea to share the report with each USAR team.

Commissioner Nishinaga supported the concept of presenting the report to legislators when they return to Sacramento in January. He added that a similar effort is planned to disseminate the

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PEER review report.

Commissioner Parker expressed an interest in contacting elected officials at their district offices. In particular, he said he wanted to deliver reports to Senator Chesbro and Assemblywoman Wiggins. Mr. Sepulveda offered the staff's assistance in making the necessary arrangements.

Mr. McCarthy suggested identifying key fire service supporters in the Legislature and providing them with copies of the report. Mr. Sepulveda said he will contact Senator Alarcon and identify other supporters.

* Motion carried, 9 - 0.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no members of the public who wished to address the Commission.

VII. MISCELLANEOUS & GOOD OF THE MEETING

October Meeting

Mr. McCarthy said the October meeting in Alameda will feature a presentation by FEMA representatives and a tour of FEMA's new office building downtown at the end of the meeting. He noted access to the FEMA building is limited, and security may be an issue if the threat level is elevated to Level Orange or higher. He added he would contact commissioners by email with further information. Mr. McCarthy asked commissioners to notify the staff in advance if they intend to go on the tour.

Mr. Sepulveda added that there would be no meeting of the Legislative Advisory Committee before the October 9 Commission meeting.

Chairman Moy announced that the Planning and Budget Committee will meet on October 8. Mr. McCarthy added that the committee may meet by teleconference.

Ms. Cogan asked commissioners to notify her about their plans to attend the reception at Chairman Moy's house the evening of October 8.

Commissioner Klein asked whether the Commission would be reviewing the final version of the strategic plan at the October meeting. Mr. McCarthy said the staff incorporated comments from Commissioner Nishinaga and Commissioner Jimmie Yee, so the final version will be ready for approval at the October meeting.

Mr. McCarthy added that Commissioner Nishinaga had proposed some changes to the Commission's vision statement, and he suggested taking up that topic at the October meeting as well.

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VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting of the Seismic Safety Commission was adjourned at 9:32 a.m.

Sue Celli
Office Manager

Approved by:

Richard McCarthy
Executive Director